NUMB. XIV.

The GRUMBLER.

By *Squire* GIZZARD.

Ne tamen ignores ubi ſim venalis, & erres
Urbe vagus totâ ; me duce certus eris. **Mart.**

From *Tueſday* May 3. to *Friday* May 6. 1715.

THE ſame Temper of Mind, which makes me prone to Grumble at Enormities, does as naturally incline me to Smile at Follies. While I chaſtiſe the bold Offenders with my Frowns, I queſtion not, but I ſhall render my Smiles formidable to Fops and Coxcombs.

When, by Intelligence from my Spies and Correſpondents, I receive Advice of Practices detrimental to Society and the Welfare of Mankind, I ſhall Grumble. When the Vanities and Impertinences of either Sex fall under my Notice, I ſhall Smile. Thus I hope to intimidate the one, and diſcountenance the other.

Of all the Failings, to which weak and trifling Minds are liable, that of eagerly catching at Applauſe and Admiration, ſeems to me the moſt ridiculous. The great Indiſcretion of ſuch a Proceeding is ſo manifeſt to every Man of Reflection, that I need not be at any Pains to convince my Readers of it. What I propoſe to obſerve at preſent is, that, of all Men, the inferior Claſs of Writers, in every Age, have been the moſt addicted to this Folly. The late Practice of ſome in this particular, may, if not reprimanded, tempt many a hopeful, unexperienced Genius to blaſt all his riſing Glory, by endeavouring to force it too much in the Bud. Let the unwary take warning from a Poet, who not long ago raiſed a *Temple of Fame* to himſelf, which was no ſooner finiſhed, than it fell to the Ground, and buried the Architect under its Ruins.

Since I am entered upon this Topick, I ſhall lay open the ſeveral Contrivances and ſecret Practices, which little Wits have recourſe to, in order to obtain a Vogue, and to make their Works Sell ; that ſo they may the more eaſily be detected for the future. But, in the firſt Place, I muſt premiſe one general Maxim, which never fails : That they, who are induſtrious in ſpreading their own Fame, are as indefatigable in leſſening that of others.

I paſs by the more obvious Artifices of the very obſcure Adventurers for Fame, who in their Prefaces talk *of ſurreptitious Copies, handed about ; of the Malice and Detraction of the Age ; of the Envy of their Contemporaries* ; or, *of the kind Reception their former Attempt met with from the Publick* : When all that while, no Mortal, beſides the Printer and Bookſeller, ever ſo much as heard of the Name or Performance of the Author. Of the ſame kind is that known Diſguiſe, under which a great

(Price Two-Pence.)

great many Anonymous Labours come out, *by a Gentleman, a Man of Honour, a Perſon of Quality*, &c. when ſome Hackney-Writer condeſcends to viſit the Publick from his Garret.

Theſe Arts will avail no longer; therefore the *Machiavilians* of the Preſs, have tried new Stratagems with no ſmall Succeſs: They have borrowed the Name of ſome Author of Note; they have prefixed a celebrated Title to their Piece; they have compiled a ſecond Part to ſome Treatiſe, which was compleat before; or they have writ a heavy, dull Poem in imitation of ſome great Genius, remarkable for his Fire and Spirit; and ſome have been ſo diſingenuous as to forge *Poſthumous Works*; a Sacrilege, which has been committed more than once upon the Memory of Mr. *Butler*.

But Authors, who ſcorn to be obliged to the Reputation of another, and would fain be thought to have a Merit of their own, have found out a Method to impoſe Ten Editions upon the Town, by a ſmall Alteration in the Title Page, within the Sale of an Hundred Books; or elſe by varying the Form of their Volume (which is a more expenſive Way to an eſtabliſhed Fame) from the *Folio* Page, gradually down to the convenient Size of a Pocket Book in *Twenty Fours*. If this Method fails of its deſired Effect, the next Impreſſion tells us of *Corrections*, *Reviſings* and *Amendments*; of *Additions*, *Remarks*, *Indexes*, &c. And rather than ſtarve a growing Reputation, the Expence of Garniture in *Cuts* is thrown in, as the laſt Effort an Author can make. Theſe ingenious Contrivances put me in mind of a young Lady (now married) whoſe Fortune was unequal to her Merit: Though ſhe bought but one Suit in a Year, ſhe appeared in as great a variety of Dreſs, and put out as frequent Editions of herſelf, as the moſt extravagant Coquet, by judiciouſly practiſing the Secret of Scowering, Dying, Altering, Trimming and Lining,

It is poſſible a Man might obſerve theſe petty Deceits, with little or no alteration in his Countenance; but I cannot refrain from ſmiling, in an emphatical manner, when Writers come to that exceſs of Vanity, as to Praiſe themſelves, or to Animadvert and Comment under-hand upon their own Productions. Rather than not be taken Notice of, ſome will turn Criticks againſt themſelves, and at an Extremity (like the *Trojans* in *Virgil*) put on the Armour of their Enemies, in hopes to Triumph.

One (who is noted for the Expeditiouſneſs of his Pen) comes out with *The Secret Hiſtory of the White Staff*; then compiles *The Secret Hiſtory of that Secret Hiſtory*; and laſtly, aſſiſts in *The Hiſtory of the Mitre and Purſe*, in Anſwer to the *Hiſtory of the Staff*. Another obliges the World with a Key to his own *Lock*, in which the *Wards* are all falſe: Under the borrowed Shape of an Apothecary, he modeſtly takes an opportunity to commend the Smoothneſs of his own Verſes, and to publiſh a Sale of Six Thouſand of his Books. The ſame Arch Wag, a little before this, gave us a *Compleat Key* to his *Farce*. I think it proper to advertize him and his Journey-Man, to play no more Pinks of this kind; if they do, I have a *Maſter-Key* now under the File, with which I ſhall be able to unlock all their Secrets from the Beginning.

I am not ignorant, that Bookſellers often draw in Writers to impoſe upon the Public. I remember, ſome Years ſince, to have heard of one remarkable Inſtance of this Nature. A ſtudious, retired Perſon had writ a Philoſophical Treatiſe in the Reign of King *Charles* the Second, when State Intrigues were rife at Home and Abroad; the Bookſeller (who knew the Advantage of timeing Things well) would not undertake to Print the Work, unleſs the Author would leave the whole Management of the Title-Page to him. The Condition was granted; and the Copy was immediately diſpatched to the Preſs. In a Fortnights time it appeared under the Title of *a Secret Hiſtory of all the Plots and Conſpiracies in* Europe; by Vertue of which it was eagerly bought up, and obtained a conſiderable Run before the Town was undeceived.

ADVERTISEMENT.

*** *Mr.* Nicholas Trotter *and Mrs.* Winifred Harmleſs, *will find by my next Paper that I have received both their Letters.*

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